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SUBJECT: UNIFEM EVENT HIGHLIGHTS WIDESPREAD COMMITMENT TO
END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

¶1. On November 25, UNIFEM hosted a high-level event at the U.N. headquarters entitled "United Voices Say NO To Violence Against Women." The event featured seven distinguished speakers, including SYG Ban Ki-moon and UNIFEM Goodwill Ambassador Nicole Kidman. The event was held as part of UNIFEM's "Say NO To Violence Against Women" campaign, a global advocacy and awareness effort to end violence against women.

¶2. The event concluded the campaign's first year-long phase, which aimed to gather one million signatures from people around the world demanding that governments prioritize ending violence against women. This initial goal was greatly surpassed in this first year and over five million signatures were presented to SYG Ban Ki-moon at the event. Among the signatories were numerous high-level officials from countries and organizations around the world. SYG Ban Ki-moon, as well as Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, both signed on to the campaign. In addition, heads of state and ministers representing 60 governments have added their signatures to support the campaign.

¶3. The event was held on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and the speakers took this opportunity to draw attention to this global problem. In celebration of the campaign's successful first year and to raise awareness of the issue, speakers focused on promising initiatives to combat this problem in countries such as Rwanda, as well as regions where efforts must be redoubled, such as the DRC. Speakers made clear that the initiative is intended to address violence of any kind that is directed towards women, including domestic violence as well as violence in conflict situations.

¶4. The remarks made by Secretary Rice upon her signing on to the Campaign on November 19, 2008 can be found at http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2008/11/112_058.htm.
Wolff